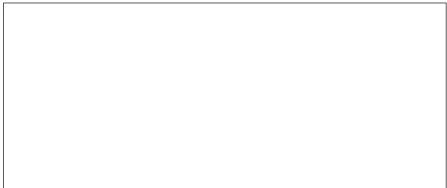


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26 November 1963

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France-Cambodia: France is considering extending additional economic and military aid to Cambodia.

Despite the general irritation in French Government circles over Sihanouk's recent actions, the prince's direct appeal for French aid has posed a dilemma for Paris. A flat rejection could adversely affect France's position in Africa and the Middle East, as well as in Southeast Asia. On the other hand, Paris is probably reluctant to take over the recently canceled US financial commitments in Cambodia.

The French are presently reviewing what seems to be a renewal of a long-standing Cambodian request for more military equipment, mostly obsolescent.

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Since 1956, French grant aid has amounted to \$15 million. Negotiations for an additional \$2 million have been deadlocked for the past 18 months by disagreements over exchange rates.

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*Reaction: [World reaction to the assassination of President Kennedy and its aftermath is increasingly preoccupied with speculation over the possible effects on US foreign and domestic policies.]

[Oswald's Communist background, however, and his dramatic murder while in police custody are being exploited for almost every conceivable propaganda line. The USSR continues to reflect sensitivity over Oswald's political motivations; Khrushchev, talking with Ambassador Kohler on 23 November, recalled that Lenin had condemned "nihilist" activities and asserted the Soviet Communist Party is traditionally opposed to terrorism.]

[Pravda, citing a denial by the US Communist Party that Oswald had ever been a member, suggested he was linked to "American Trotskyites," but concluded that the Kennedy assassination was the work of "fascist forces" trying to destroy the détente atmosphere.]

[Papers in West Germany, Belgium, and Lebanon, among others, theorize Oswald was killed by associates to silence him. A Cairo newspaper calls his killer "one Jack Rubenstein, a Jew of course." The US Embassy in Beirut has received many telegrams speculating that Oswald's killing is evidence of a Communist plot against the US. The Embassy notes with dismay the probable foreign impact of dramatic news photos showing the escorting officer apparently looking away while Oswald is shot.]

[An Afrikaans paper in Johannesburg editorialized that while US racial difficulties might not be "directly"]

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Concerned with the assassination," they had become a vehicle for the undermining of the state by the Communists and Afro-Asians.]

[A Cairo editorial expresses concern that President Johnson, while committed to the policies of his predecessor, may have to compromise and postpone decisions in order to avoid antagonisms as the US enters an election year. Syrian Vice President Bitar commented to Ambassador Knight on 25 November that the Arab cause might suffer from the loss of President Kennedy, "who had shown signs of increasingly better understanding of the Arabs and their problems.]

[West German and French press commentaries range from expectations of initial uncertainty or temporizing in US foreign policy to the gloomy view of Der Spiegel that it is "doomed to immobility" for the next year.]

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[Genevieve Tabouis, writing in Paris Jour, expects no major decisions from the present meeting between President Johnson and General De Gaulle, but notes that De Gaulle will probably urge that Franco-American problems be settled in the course of 1964, while Johnson will urge a "Western summit conference.]

[The Peruvian Chamber of Deputies on 24 November unanimously adopted a motion urging the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to President Kennedy.]

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